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## **Speaker's Press Office**

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### ***Speaker Hastert Makes Health Care Access a Top Priority*** **Medical Liability Reform Stresses Care, Not Court**

(Washington) Speaker of the House J. Dennis Hastert (R-IL) today made the following statement:

“With medical costs rising and doctors and hospitals shuttering their doors, it’s obvious that America’s health care system is in critical condition. One of my goals for this new Congress is to expand access to affordable health care and stem this growing medical crisis. We must make helping patients get the care they need when they need it a top priority.

“I’m pleased Congressman Jim Greenwood (R-PA) has introduced the bipartisan HEALTH Act. This much-needed legislation will help reform our medical liability system by addressing two crucial concerns – the high costs of health care and patient access to their doctor and hospital. This bill is a good, first start for this new Congress, and because of that, I’m deeming it one of our top ten pieces of legislation – H.R. 5.

“It is my hope that the bipartisan HEALTH Act will move swiftly through the Judiciary and Energy & Commerce Committees so we can pass it on the House floor in March and get into negotiations with the Senate soon thereafter. The bottom line is we need to make sure that doctors and hospitals are treating patients, not getting out of this much-needed profession to avoid excessive lawsuits and exorbitant insurance premiums.”

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